T. Pitman Dunsmore 1853

Homoeopathy and its Founder.

In accordance with the custom of Medical Colleges I find myself called upon to write a Thesis. As it cannot be expected of a Student to write an orgional article on the subject of Medicine, after the tens of thousands of volumes already written. I shall confine myself to an account of Homoeopathy and its founder. And even here I shall labour under the same disadvantages and while exclaiming with Solomon that there's nothing new under the Sun. I will console myself that the old things in antiquarian Medicines are fast passing away, new and better are succeeding and may I not also hope that the bright Sun of truth may so illumine all the preaching and practice of our blessed Homoeopathy that ever its enemies may

See the error of their ways and be willing to
embrace the truthful teachings of an immo-
-ortal founder. Samuel Hahnemann.
As I intend to begin at the begining
I shall say in regard to him that he was
born in Meißen Saxony, in the year 1755.
His Father educated him with the greatest
care untill his connection with the
University at Leipsic in 1775.
Here his limited means urged him to
unremitted exertions and he supported
himself by translating English works
into German. From Leipsic he went
to attend the Hospital at Vienna where
his excellence of character, and interest of
medical acquirements won the friend-
ship and acquired the confidence of
Dr. Quarin the Physician at the

Hospital (who about that time being appointed Physician to the Emperor)

And for a time being unable to attend to his duties on account of Sickness, selected Hahnemann from some 200 Physicians of eminence to fill his place in taking charge of the Hospital.

Hahnemann next went Hermanstadt where he was appointed Physician and Librarian & Superintendant of a Museum of Coins to the home of Baron Van Breckenshal, Governor, of Transylvania.

His improved circumstances enabled him to visit Erlangin, where after a year he read and defended his Thesis, and received his degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1779.

For a period of ten years he resided at Dessean, Magdeburg, and finally

Settled in Leipsic. Here he directed his attention to the Study of Chemistry and, Translating a number of interesting papers from English into German, he at the same time published a Treatise on a new mode of preparing mercury, which derives its name from him. Mercurius Solubilis, Hahnemanni. His research on poisning by Arsenic with legal evidence of imperative impatience to Medical Jurisprudence, and celebrated Hahnemania Wine test, which appeared and prevented the adulteration of Wine by Lead, confered on him an honourable Reputation among the Medical Philosophers of the continent.

The first idea of the fundamental doctrine of Homoeopathy seems to have entered his mind in 1790.

When in his 45th year, he was trans-
-lating Cullins Materia Medica into
German. Disatisfied with the Authors
attempt to explain the action of Quinine
or Peruvian bark in cureing Intermittent
Fever, he resolved to make trials with it
on his own person he being then in
perfect health. Having taken a suffi-
-cient quantity of this Drug he was speed-
-ily attacked with Symtons resembling
those of fever and Ague, And forthwith
says his historian arose in his mind
the conception of the great truth which
was destined to constitute the basis of
the new art of Medicine.

The fall of the apple was to Newton
the great first cause of his grand
Theory of Gravitation.

Observing that the milk maids were not effected by the miasmia of the small pox was to Jenner the starting point for the wonderful and much regarded system of prevention known as vaccination.

So to Hahnemann the proved facts in regard to Quinine, opens to him a world of discoveries for the good of mankind in comparison to which those of Newton and Jenner sink into insignificance. Too many view the isolated fact regarding Quinine to have only served as the means of inventing another Lolagogue as regards Tonic Mixture, but fortunately for the world Hahnemann was made of better material. He reasoned that the power of Quinine would cure fever and ague,

and therefore he could depend upon its power to create in the healthy body a similer disease. With a view of testing this hypothesis, he tried the effects of other medicines upon himself and others, with the same result. Viz. That medicine incite in the healthy body the same symptoms they are capable of removing when they occur naturally in the diseased body.

Proceeding then to search the records of medicine as to effects accidentally produced by poisons and other strong Drugs, and finding every thing as he believed confermations of his theory derived from experiment he hesitated no longer to consider as established and to promulgate the grand law that every disease is best cured by that medicine which is capable of producing in the healthy body

similer Symtoms of a similer disease, as is usually stated more briefly Similia Similibus Curanter. This doctrine he called Homœopathy and those who adopted it Homœopath's or Homœopathists. In contra-distinction the Common doctrine was named from employing in the treatment of disease medicines producing an effect not like, but different from that produced by the disease. Allopathy and its Profesors Allopath's or Allopathist's. Their distinctions are known throughout the World. Although the antiquarian friends are somewhat annoyed at the title, and just at this time are calling upon each other not to answer when so addressed, yet in spite of all their efforts it will adhere to them, and nothing but a speedy

repentance of their error and embracing Homoeopathy will save them.

The course pursued by Hahnemann in his investigations to an uninterested person would certainly imply on his part, an earnest desire for the truth for truth's sake, and allowing his experiments to be fair was he not irresistably led to his conclusions. But he stopt not here, although he had already done enough to immortalize himself, for like Newton he felt that he stood only on the shore while the great Ocean of Truth was spread before him, and what he had already learned was as the smallest grain of sand on that shore compared to the great Ocean that was before him.

Having as he conceived demonstrated the truth of the Law, he next proceeded to test its practical truth by selecting a number

of his friends, intelligent Medical men. And carried on for a long series of years extensive and continual experiments in the trial of various medicines. Up to this time we have some two hundred remedies tested and their pathogenesis written out.

The results of his experiments he recorded in his Materia Medica Pura published in 1815.

Hahnemann gives us the rational of this cure of disease. He asserts that two diseases cannot exist in the body at the same time, the Stronger will over come the weaker.

He argues if by giving a medicine capable of producing a Similes disease to the one under which the patient labours, the the Medicinal disease being more intense will overcome the natural, by substituting a Medicinal, and the Medicinal disease

will be cured as soon as the medicines expend their force. And given as they are in small doses the effect will soon disappear leaving the patient in perfect health.

The curing of disease Homoeopathically that is with medicines capable of producing a similar disease in the healthy was he maintained, a fact which could not be disproved, whether the theory invented to explain it be true or false.

Such is a brief history of the man of the age, and of his doctrine. Like all great and good men has had his revilers and persecutors. For his reputation even among his enemies, I will give the exact words of Dr. Forbes, only remarking, that if there were more like him among the opposers of Homoeopathy we should find

less abuse and contumely. Speaking of Hahnemann he says, he was a genious and a Scholar, a man of indefatigable industry, and undaunted energy.

In the history of medicine his name will appear in the same list with those of the greatest Systematists and Theorist's. Unsurpassed by few in the originality of his views, and superior to most in having carried out his Doctrines into actual and most extensive practice and of his Desciples he says, they are Spread over the whole of the civilized world. Not a town of any considerable size in Germany, France, Italy, England, or America, that does not boast of possessing one or more Homoeopathic Physicians, not a few of

Whoom are men of high respectability and learning, many of them in large practice and patronized by men of high rank. And thus I leave the subject finally believing that at no distant day there will be no such distinction known as Homœopath or Allopath, but all will believe and practice the Divine art as expounded by our immortal founder and Law giver

Samuel Hahnemann.

J. Pitman Dunsmore

Providence

R Islands.